

Marjolaine

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March 9, 2006

To: Senator Prague, Representative Ryan and Members of the Labor Committee
From: Rusty Hamilton
Re: SB 462

I am unable to attend the public hearing today of your committee because of commitments to my business in New Haven but I feel it is important to let you know of my **support for Senate Bill 462, An Act Concerning a Fair Share Health Care Surcharge.**

I have owned and operated a small specialty bakery, called Marjolaine, in New Haven for 22 years at the same location. I employ four area residents full time and several high school students part time on weekends. I am fortunate that all of my employees are married to partners who are able to include them on their health insurance plans. If I had to pay the outrageous costs of health insurance I would not be able to keep the business going and would not be able to employ anyone including myself. I am a responsible business owner and would like to be able to offer these benefits but in the current market cannot afford to.

We have a health care crisis in this country and in this state. Small employers and families are taking the hit for this crisis. And while we are just trying to take care of our families and stay open, huge, international, mega-corporations are taking advantage of the state health care system. This is unfair and puts me at a competitive disadvantage. I make specialty cakes and pastries and charge what it costs in ingredients and time. Wal-Mart and other mega stores are able to under-charge me and make enormous profits and, in many cases, receive tax breaks to locate in particular communities.

We need to address health care and insurance as a state. As a business owner, I need healthy employees. As a citizen, I need to know that my elected officials are working to make health care affordable for everyone. I urge you to pass SB 462, a Fair Share Health Care bill.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rusty Hamilton", is located at the bottom right of the page.